

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Leonard Diana, attorney of record, on September 8, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the title:

System, method, and program storage medium for managing printing apparatuses

~~Information processing apparatus, information processing method, program storage medium and program~~

In the claims:

1, 45, and 46 (canceled)

48 (currently amended) A management system, for managing contracts for a plurality of printing apparatuses, comprising:

a first reception unit that receives a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus for which a contract has been made and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, the first ID and the second ID being

transmitted via the communication line, and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a second reception unit that receives a user instruction indicating whether or not a contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus in case of replacing the first printing apparatus by the second printing apparatus;

a search unit that searches for first information related to the contract corresponding to the first ID received by said first reception unit, when said second reception unit receives the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus; and

a generation unit that generates second information related to the contract for the second printing apparatus, based on the first information searched for by said search unit and machine types of the first and second apparatuses,

wherein said generation unit generates third information related to a new contract regardless of the printing apparatus managed in the past, when said second reception unit receives the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing is not be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus,

wherein the contracts are related to a charge amount for printing per sheet in the plurality of printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation unit determines a discounted charge based on the past use history of said first printing apparatus and transmits the contract content based on said discounted charge to the first reception unit,

wherein said generation unit generates the second information based on a charge condition determined in accordance with the machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, and

wherein, if responsive to a determination that the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a copier, the charge condition is determined such that the charge amount for printing per sheet in the contract for the second printing apparatus is discounted as compared to that in the contract for the first printing apparatus.

54 (currently amended) A management method, for use in a management system that is connect to a communication line, for managing contracts for a plurality of printing apparatuses, comprising:

a first reception step, of receiving a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus for which a contract has been made and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line, and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a second reception step, of receiving a user instruction indicating whether or not a contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the

first printing apparatus in case of replacing the first printing apparatus by the second printing apparatus;

a search step, of searching for first information related to the contract corresponding to the first ID received by said first reception unit, when said second reception unit receives the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus; and

a generation step, of generating second information related to the contract for the second printing apparatus, based on the first information searched for by said search unit and machine types of the first and second apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes generating third information related to a new contract regardless of the printing apparatus managed in the past, when the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing is not be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus is received in said second reception step,

wherein the contracts are related to a charge amount for printing per sheet in the plurality of printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes determining a discounted charge based on the past use history of said first printing apparatus and transmitting the contract content based on said discounted charge to the first reception unit,

wherein said generation step includes generating the second information based on a charge condition determined in accordance with the machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, and

~~wherein, if responsive to a determination that~~ the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a copier, the charge condition is determined such that the charge amount for printing per sheet in the contract for the second printing apparatus is discounted as compared to that in the contract for the first printing apparatus.

60 (currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium, encoding a program for causing a computer to perform a management method, for use in a management system that is connected to a communication line, for managing contracts for a plurality of printing apparatuses, said method comprising:

a first reception step, of receiving a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus for which a contract has been made and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line, and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a second reception step, of receiving a user instruction indicating whether or not a contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus in case of replacing the first printing apparatus by the second printing apparatus;

a search step, of searching for first information related to the contract corresponding to the first ID received by said first reception unit, when said second reception unit receives the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second

printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus;
and

a generation step, of generating second information related to the contract for the second printing apparatus, based on the first information searched for by said search unit and machine types of the first and second apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes generating third information related to a new contract regardless of the printing apparatus managed in the past, when the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing is not be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus is received in said second reception step,

wherein the contracts are related to a charge amount for printing per sheet in the plurality of printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes determining a discounted charge based on the past use history of said first printing apparatus and transmitting the contract content based on said discounted charge to the first reception unit.

wherein said generation step includes generating the second information based on a charge condition determined in accordance with the machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, and

wherein, if responsive to a determination that the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a copier, the charge condition is determined such that the charge amount for printing per sheet in the contract for the second printing apparatus is discounted as compared to that in the contract for the first printing apparatus.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JASON B. DUNHAM whose telephone number is (571)272-8109. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeff Smith can be reached on 571-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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JBD
Patent Examiner
9/8/08